

## United States Senate

WASHINGTON, DC 20510

July 1, 2013

The Honorable Charles T. Hagel  
Secretary of Defense  
100 Defense Pentagon  
Washington, D.C. 20301-1000

Dear Secretary Hagel,

I am deeply concerned about the Department's decision to give an American taxpayer-funded pay raise to foreign national employees in Germany while over 650,000 U.S. Department of Defense civilian employees are furloughed.

While over 19,000 of my fellow North Carolinians are furloughed, roughly the same number of German workers will receive a one-time payment of 500 Euros in 2013 and a monthly pay increase of 30 Euros starting next year. Workers in North Carolina will see a 20% pay cut each month of the furlough for a total loss in pay of \$64 million. At the same time, German workers will receive over \$16 million in additional pay in 2013 and 2014.

When the Department announced the finalized furloughs in May, you stated that "we're going in together, we're coming out together. No one service, no one's going to be protected more than anybody else. Budgets are different, and everybody's budget's a little different, but we're all in this together." Yet the Department categorically made an exception for all OCONUS foreign nationals, while only a couple of thousand DoD civilians were exempted from furloughs in North Carolina. This is not the message we should be sending to the hardworking Americans who are supporting our military on bases across the United States and around the world.

The most disturbing issue is the justification behind these pay increases, which are not required by any law or statute. Instead, the Department is simply acceding to the demands of Ver.di, the union representing German workers, and fears of political pressure from the German government. According to information provided by the Department to the Senate Armed Services Committee, the Department believed that failure to reach an agreement could lead to a strike, and that the Ver.di could "turn the negotiations into a political issue, attempting to force parliamentary inquiries or hearings on the matter." When hardworking U.S. DoD civilians are being furloughed and have not seen a pay increase in several years, I believe the Department should be willing to stand up to this pressure from German workers.

I urge the Department to suspend this action immediately so that the decision can be carefully reconsidered.

Sincerely,



Kay R. Hagan